



TOWN OF

KENSINGTON

JANUARY 2005 *JOURNAL*

Meeting Schedule

Monday, January 31 at 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting

Audit Committee Report

Gail Tait-Nouri - Update on Kensington Bike Loop

Lions Club Presentation of Veterans Plaque

Centenarian Proclamation for Fred Klauda

Monday, February 7 at 7 p.m. Work Session

Monday, February 28 at 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting

Town Office Closing Information

The Town office will be closed on Monday, February 21

Trash pick up will be on Tuesday, February 22

Snow Removal Reminder

Please remember to clear the walkway in front of your property within 24 hours from the time precipitation stops. Please be aware of your neighbors who may not be able to follow the snow ordinance and help them if you can.

Maryland Tax Return 2004 Form 502/503

Please remember to write the Town of Kensington in the box marked city, town or taxing area. This will insure that a portion of your tax dollars will return to the Town.

Contact us at 3710 Mitchell Street, Kensington, MD 20895

Phone: 301-949-2424; Fax: 301-949-4925;

E-mail: mayor.council@tok.org; Web Site: www.tok.org

Chess Club

Come join us Wednesday nights from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for chess at the Armory. All levels of play welcome. All ages welcome. \$2 donation requested to defray room rental. For more information, contact Cindy Conant 301-933-8056 or email conant.c@erols.com or Jody Krieger 301-942-8803.

Reminder on Trash Pick Up

Do not put trash out on the weekends before 4:00 p.m. Sunday night. Trash must be out before 7:00 a.m. the day of pick up but not earlier than 4:00 p.m. the prior evening. Please keep your trashcans clean by washing them out and lining them with thick plastic bags that are tied. A note will be left on unsanitary trashcans, cans that have rusted through areas, tears, or fractures, and trashcans with lids that do not fit properly. They will not be emptied.

“If I Were Mayor I Would . . .” Contest

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) and the Maryland Mayors’ Association invites 4th grade students throughout Maryland to participate in a statewide essay contest. Contest deadline is April 1, 2005. For more information contact MML at 1-800-492-7121 or www.mdmunicipal.org

DRIVE WITH CARE – WALK WITH CAUTION

Drivers

It’s the law – Stop for pedestrians at all crosswalks and intersections.

Don’t block crosswalks when stopping at intersections.

Always look and yield to pedestrians, especially before turning right at a green light or making a right turn on red.

Be careful when passing stopped vehicles – they might be stopping for pedestrians .

Pedestrians

Cross the street at marked crosswalks and intersections.

Before crossing look left, right, then left again, and over your shoulder for turning vehicles.

Stop and look every time before crossing the street, even when you have the right-of-way, and especially at intersections with right turn on red.

Stay visible after dark and in bad weather with light-colored or reflective clothing.

Never assume drivers see you – make eye contact with drivers before crossing.

Building Permits Issued

Demolition at 10104 Hadley Place and 10202 Carroll Place

Mayor's Report

Happy New Year

From the Mayor's Desk 2005

Brief Annual Report on the State of the Town

Your Town government thanks our citizens for the many volunteer hours you have contributed in 2004. Each of you who gave your time and talent on a committee is greatly appreciated. The whole Town benefits from your dedication and new ideas to improve our quality of life.

Each year our events are attended by more citizens living in and around our Town. We thank the business community for chairing the last event of the year, our Holiday Celebration. They coordinated the Open House on Howard Avenue (east and west) with the children's party at Town Hall. The gathering was the largest we have seen. The weather was cold but clear. Everyone enjoyed the cookies from Circle Manor. We thank Circle Manor for being a good neighbor and part of our Town activities throughout the year. A special thanks to Hardware City for donating all of the lights for our annual tree lighting.

Some of our residents have "adopted" a park next to their home. Over the past year they have worked in the gardens and in the fall they helped rake leaves. We thank them for their extra help in keeping our parks beautiful.

A Few Key Accomplishments in 2004

- We hired Montgomery County Police on an overtime basis to enforce Town traffic restrictions. This helped to slow down and cut down on cut through traffic in our Town.
- Received approval from the Planning Board to renovate the Kensington Cabin with funding from Historic Preservation. The Town will enter into a rental agreement with the Planning Board for ten years.
- Worked with Safeway on their redevelopment plans to achieve the most compatible changes to the site. Safeway has the right to rebuild on their property without our approval; however, by having them work with our Commercial Development Review Committee we have a plan that includes improvement to the streets and rights-of-way surrounding their property and a twenty foot building set back from Armory Avenue to allow for a small park.
- Improved our Council chambers and replaced our heating system on the ground floor. The system we had was over 20 years old and was inadequate for the whole floor.

- Our first rain garden was installed in Ernest Park by volunteers, Montgomery County staff and Town employees.
- Gateway signs on secondary entrances were installed this past year to greet people coming into our Town.
- Montgomery County government and Mr. Gould reached an agreement for the cement plant redevelopment. The Town will benefit by a new parking lot on a portion of the site being built for our use. We will also have a retail business built on the site by the owner who wants to work with the Town to make sure the building will be compatible to our historic district.
- Brick sidewalks on Montgomery Ave and Carroll Place were restored. The standing water problems were finally resolved and the sidewalk is safe for pedestrians.
- The brick facade on our Town Hall/Community Center was pressure washed and repointed. We are restoring the building to be a structure we can be proud of as well as ADA compatible and more user friendly.
- A new fence was installed in St Paul Park and Phase II was completed including a water fountain and baseball backstop.
- More swings were added to Reinhardt Park to accommodate the many children who play in the park each day.
- As part of our traffic calming to provide a safer town we are pleased to have received notice from State Highway Administration that funding to reconfigure the entrance to Armory Avenue has been approved and that work will begin and be completed in 2005.

We are happy to welcome so many new residents to the Town. It's a joy to see so many children playing in our parks on the new equipment.

If you want to get to know your neighbors, one way is to volunteer for a committee. Please call Town Hall if you are interested in becoming an active citizen. Citizen involvement is key to keeping the small town environment we all enjoy.

The Mayor and Council look forward to another year of working together with our residents and business owners for continued improvement to our Town.

Council Member Carr's Report

Council Member Carr completed the coursework requirements for his Certificate from the [Academy for Excellence in Local Government](#).

He attended a committee meeting on double taxation with the Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League.

He contacted the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation regarding timing of the signal at Connecticut Avenue and Washington Street. The engineer checked the signal timing and completed adjustments to provide a longer yellow cycle.

The Traffic Advisory Committee met on November 11th and discussed several traffic and pedestrian safety issues throughout the Town. The committee's role is to advise the Council on traffic and safety issues. Please contact the Town office if you are interested in serving on the committee or would like a copy of the minutes. There are currently committee vacancies for the following streets: Fawcett, Ferndale, Montgomery, Perry Ave, Prospect, Summit, Mannakee, Saint Paul and Warner (east of Connecticut).

Council Member Carr researched several grants that may be available from the State Highway Administration to fund pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements in Town.

He has continued researching options for upgrading Town streetlights. The plan is to install two different varieties of sample streetlights near the Town Hall to get feedback before committing to a larger installation. Streetlight upgrades can enhance aesthetics as well as improve safety, reduce energy consumption and reduce sky glow.

Adopted Amendments

Effective January 24, 2005

Chapter III, Article 2, Section 3-203 Driveway Construction Permits

Section 3-203. Driveway Construction Permits

(a) No person, partnership or corporation shall construct, have or cause to be constructed or paved any driveway or other entrances for vehicles across a public right-of-way without having first obtained a written permit for such construction from the Clerk-Treasurer, upon approval of the Building Inspector. This Section shall apply to both new construction and the widening of existing curb cuts. No driveway shall be wider than 11 feet unless approved by the Council at a hearing. If a wider driveway is requested by a resident a hearing will be set to evaluate need.

(b) No permit required by this Section shall be issued without approval of the Mayor and Building Inspector.

(c) No permit shall be issued by the Building Inspector if he determines that the proposed driveway would:

- (1) Create a traffic hazard, result in unreasonably restricted use of the streets, or impede the free movement of vehicles upon the streets;
- (2) Unreasonably restrict the distribution of parking spaces at the curb of streets;

- (3) Negatively affect the free and safe travel of pedestrians;
- (4) Pass through or be located within four (4) feet of a regular street crosswalk;
- (5) Pass through or be within four (4) feet of any designated bus loading zone;
- (6) Cross the outer grass strip and the sidewalk at an angle of less than thirty degrees to the curb line; or
- (7) Place an undue burden on the storm drainage system of the area or involve a storm drainage problem, unless construction plans make adequate provisions for solving any storm drainage problem as determined by the Council.

(d) The fee for permits required under this Section shall be determined by resolution of the Council from time to time.

Amendment to Chapter V, Article 4 (before Section 5-401)

The Town accomplished the inclusion of its historic district on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. In 1986, the district was designated as a Montgomery County Historic District. The district is distinguished as a collection of late 19th and early 20th century houses exhibiting a variety of architectural styles popular during the Victorian period including Queen Anne, Shingle, Eastlake, and Colonial Revival. The houses share a uniformity of scale, set back, and construction materials that when coupled with the subdivision plan creates a Victorian garden suburb. The Vision of Kensington has been adopted as the Preservation Plan for the Town's Historic District.

Town Meeting

November 29, 2004

A Public Hearing was held on a variance request for 10100 Frederick Avenue. The owner requested a variance for an encroachment into the front yard setback for an unenclosed covered porch. The variance was needed because of the unusual slope and shape of the lot. (See Council Actions below)

Mayor Raufaste called the Meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. with Council Members Carr, Pfautz, and Timlin present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A Moment of Silence was observed.

Fred Boyd was present from M-NCPPC and gave an introduction to the Town's upcoming sector plan review. The last sector plan was done in 1978. M-NCPPC will be reviewing it to see what changes are needed. The plan will take approximately two years to complete. The Town will have the assistance of a team of urban, transportation,

environmental and park planners from the County. One of the primary areas that will be addressed will be the commercial area to see if current zones are appropriate in keeping with the general scale of business development in Kensington.

The amendment to Section 5-104 Building Lines was introduced which requires 10-foot side yard setbacks for new construction with projections of up to 18" being allowed for roof overhangs and up to 24" for window wells. Additions to other dwellings will require that a sum of 20 feet on both sides be maintained. The Town's variance procedure will now be consistent with the County's variance procedure. The Council will continue to review this section to address other issues including front setbacks and large additions.

The amendment to Chapter V, Article 4, Historic Preservation was introduced which provides information about Kensington's historic district and adopts the Vision of Kensington as guidelines for the historic district.

The amendment to Chapter III, Article 2, Section 3-203 Driveway Construction Permits was introduced which requires driveways to be no wider than 11 feet.

The Mayor informed residents that the Town is still pursuing an agreement regarding the renovation and use of Kensington Cabin. The Town may be required as part of the agreement to be responsible for maintenance of the Cabin.

The traffic engineer will be asked to review the stop signs at Frederick Avenue and Frederick Place to see if they are properly located.

Neal Stablow was sworn in as Building Inspector.

The Minutes from November 1, 2004 Work Session were reviewed.

The Mayor and Council gave monthly reports. Council Member Carr is researching the options and costs for upgrading streetlights and also reviewing a change to the sign ordinance.

Council Member Carr reported that the owner of the vacant lot on Connecticut Avenue between Warner and Baltimore Street plans to develop it according to previously approved plans.

Council Member Carr reported that the traffic committee met and would like the traffic engineer to review other areas throughout the Town including pedestrian safety at Baltimore and Connecticut.

Council Member Carr drafted letters on lighting, speeding on the north side of Connecticut Avenue and pedestrian issues on Connecticut Avenue for Council review.

Council Actions

Council Member Timlin moved to approve the variance for 10100 Frederick Avenue as requested for an encroachment into the front foot setback ranging from three foot nine

inches to fourteen and one-half inches as designated in the plan due to the shape of the lot. Council Member Pfautz seconded and it passed unanimously.

Council Member Pfautz moved to introduce amendments to Chapter V, Article I, Section 5-104 Building Lines as published in the November/December 2004 Journal. Council Member Timlin seconded and it passed unanimously.

Council Member Pfautz moved to introduce amendments to Chapter V, Article 4, Historic Preservation as published in the November/December 2004 Journal. Council Member Timlin seconded and it passed unanimously.

Council Member Pfautz moved to introduce amendments to Chapter III, Article 2, Section 3-203 Driveway Construction Permits as published in the November/December 2004 Journal. Council Member Timlin seconded and it passed unanimously.

Council Member Carr moved to confirm the Mayor's appointment of Neal Stablow as Building Inspector. Council Member Pfautz seconded and it passed unanimously.

Council Member Pfautz moved to approve the minutes from the October 25, 2004 Town Meeting and the November 1, 2004 Work Session. Council Member Timlin seconded and it passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Work Session of Mayor & Council

December 13, 2004

The Work Session commenced at 7:00 p.m., Mayor Raufaste, Council Members Carr, Cowan, Pfautz, and Timlin, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present and the following issues were addressed.

Joe McCathran from Linton, Shafer & Co. was present and discussed the Town's financial statements and audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2004 and reported that the Town was in good financial condition with a fund balance representing 67% of annual expenditures.

Traffic engineer, Joe Cutro, was present and discussed ways to improve the intersection of Metropolitan Avenue and St. Paul Street. He suggested the following: crosshatch the existing crosswalk on the east leg of Metropolitan Avenue, install in-street pedestrian crossing signs at the Metropolitan Avenue crosswalk, relocate the pedestrian crossing sign on westbound Metropolitan Avenue closer to the crosswalk, and removal of the tree obstructing the stop sign on the southbound St. Paul approach to the intersection. SHA has determined that neither multiway STOP control nor pedestrian-oriented signalization of the intersection can be justified due to the volume of traffic crossing and safety history.

The Council concurred to have Joe Cutro review the signage at the intersection of Frederick Avenue and Frederick Place.

The Town will add a painted median on Plyers Mill Road in the spring.

Residents will conduct a traffic count survey to determine the need for requesting replacement/relocation of a no left turn sign from Washington Street to Prospect Street that was removed some years ago. Town staff will review old minutes and records to determine whether the sign was taken down by Council action.

The Council discussed M-NCPPC condition of sidewalks for the Nash Place resubdivision and will clarify with M-NCPPC the width being required and review the site to determine the need for a sidewalk.

Council Member Pfautz will draft a letter to the County Council to obtain information and clarification on properties in the historic district that are exempt from regulations.

The Council discussed additional changes to the language introduced at the November 29, 2004 Town Meeting to Section 5-104 of the Code regarding front porches and additions of 75% or more of the gross square footage and concurred not to make changes until after the introduced changes are adopted.

The project list was reviewed.

The Council approved a letter to be sent to the Writ Building regarding voluntary enforcement of lighting.

The Town will install two different samples of streetlights to determine which one is appropriate for use in the Town.

Council Member Carr will draft a letter to SHA requesting the Town be put on the list for the sidewalk retrofit program, stating that we are interested in widening and offsetting the sidewalks where appropriate on Connecticut Avenue and on Knowles Avenue, requesting repainting of crosswalks at Perry Street, and requesting them to crosshatch the crosswalk at Metropolitan Avenue and St. Paul Street. The letter will also include a request to fund "bicycle friendly" storm drain grates.

Council Member Carr will draft a letter to the County requesting review of signal timing north of Town on Connecticut Avenue and University Boulevard, a longer yellow light at Washington Street and Connecticut Avenue, and review of bus stop locations at Safeway and Baltimore Street.

Council Member Carr will request the addition of pedestrian countdown type of lights at Connecticut Avenue/Knowles Avenue and Connecticut Avenue/Washington Street.

The Mayor will contact the County to request speed enforcement on Metropolitan Avenue, University Boulevard, and Connecticut Avenue.

The Council discussed a resident's request to remove the "No Turn On Red" sign for eastbound traffic on Washington Street turning right onto Connecticut Avenue. The Council concurred not to change the sign.

The minutes from November 29, 2004 were reviewed and corrected.

The monthly correspondence was reviewed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Work Session of Mayor & Council

January 3, 2005

The Public Hearing for amendments to Chapter V, Article 1, Section 5-104, Building Lines was not held. The Town will consult with the Town attorney on possible revisions, which will be reintroduced.

A Public Hearing was held on an amendment to Chapter V, Article 4, Historic Preservation. There was no opposition. (See Council Actions below)

A Public Hearing was held on amendments to Chapter III, Article 2, Section 3-203 Driveway Permits. There was no opposition. (See Council Actions below)

The Work Session commenced at 7:20 p.m., Mayor Raufaste, Council Members Carr, Cowan, Pfautz, and Timlin, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present and the following issues were addressed.

The Mayor and Council discussed repair of the Kent Street Bridge and concurred to have the County handle the project and pursue a federal grant that would pay for 80% of the cost.

The Mayor will continue to request that the County manage the Town's storm drains.

The project list was reviewed and updated. The Mayor will have the Building Inspector review plans for lighting compliance at a new business. Council Member Timlin will obtain the cost for developing a sign ordinance brochure.

The Mayor and Council discussed the formation of an Architectural Review Committee and will discuss further at another Work Session.

The Mayor presented a list of goals for 2005 which included the following: repair bridges, rehab Kensington Cabin, relocate Town offices on 3rd floor, rehab kitchen, repair brick sidewalks for Kensington Parkway, Flinn Park, Prospect Street, and Washington Street, clean storm drains, resurface Kensington Parkway (north side), resand/refinish drill hall floor, move the Historical Society downstairs, install carpet on first floor and replace bathrooms on first floor.

Council Member Timlin will research how other communities accomplished major road planning improvements and the Town will also review road planning improvements during the sector plan review.

The minutes from December 13, 2004 were reviewed.

The monthly correspondence was reviewed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Council Actions

Council Member Pfautz moved to adopt the amendment to Chapter V, Article 4, Historic Preservation as published in the November/December 2004 Journal. Council Member Timlin seconded and it passed unanimously.

Council Member Pfautz moved to adopt the amendments to Chapter III, Article 2, Section 3-203 Driveway Permits as published in the November/December 2004 Journal, effective January 24, 2005. Council Member Cowan seconded and it passed unanimously.

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